

Listing of the Claims:

1-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) A stent having a longitudinal axis and first and second ends with an intermediate section therebetween, the stent having an unexpanded and expanded configuration, the stent having axial flexibility in its unexpanded configuration and comprising:

a plurality of circumferential springs disposed adjacent one another along the longitudinal axis,

each of said circumferential springs connected to an immediately adjacent circumferential spring by a connector member placed generally along the stent circumference;

each of said circumferential springs comprising a plurality of circumferentially spaced struts disposed generally along the longitudinal axis, each of said struts having a first end portion and a second end portion and a curved portion therebetween, a said curved portion generally placed along said longitudinal axis of the stent, said first end portion being connected to a second end portion of a first immediately adjacent strut, and said second end portion being connected to a first end portion of a second immediately adjacent strut.

21. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 20, wherein said curved portion includes at least two curves.

22. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 20, wherein the stent is a balloon expandable coronary stent.

23. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 22, wherein the curved portions of said adjacent struts in each circumferential spring are generally in phase with one another.

24. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 20, wherein the first and second end portions of said struts are curved.

25. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 20, wherein each of said struts is a generally continuous wave along a line segment that is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis,

26. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 20, wherein in the expanded condition the curved portions of said struts become straighter.

27. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 22, wherein the stent is fabricated from a hollow stainless steel tube.

28. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 20, wherein the stent is fabricated from a hollow tube of shape memory material.

29. (Currently amended) A stent having a longitudinal axis and first and second ends with an intermediate section therebetween, the stent having an unexpanded and expanded configuration, the stent having axial flexibility in its unexpanded configuration and comprising:

a plurality of generally cylindrical rings disposed adjacent to one another along the longitudinal axis,

each of said rings connected to an immediately adjacent ring by a connector member placed generally along the stent circumference;

each of said rings comprising a plurality of circumferentially spaced struts disposed generally along the longitudinal axis, each of said struts having a first end portion and a second end portion and a curved portion therebetween, a said curved end portion generally placed along said longitudinal axis, said first end portion being connected to a second end portion of a first immediately adjacent strut and said second end portion being connected to a first end portion of a second immediately adjacent strut.

30. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 29, wherein said curved portion includes at least two curves.

31. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 29, wherein the stent is a balloon expandable coronary stent.

32. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 32, wherein the curved portions of said adjacent struts in each ring are generally in phase with one another.

33. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 29, wherein the first and second end portions of said struts are curved.

34. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 29, wherein each of said struts is a generally continuous wave along a line segment that is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.

35. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 29, wherein in the expanded condition the curved portions of said struts become straighter.

36. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 30, wherein the stent is fabricated from a stainless steel hollow tube.

37. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 29, wherein the stent is fabricated from a hollow tube of shape memory material.